



U.S. Department of Justice

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**NEWS RELEASE**

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**“Club Drug” Defendants Sentenced to Prison**

U.S. Attorney Thomas Scott Woodward announced that two men were sentenced in federal court today for trafficking in what are commonly called “club drugs.”

Lewis Aaron Nixon, III, 28, of Oklahoma City, and Lorenzo Cottrell Marable, 25, of Farmington Hills, Michigan, were both sentenced to 57 months in the Federal Bureau of Prisons to be followed by three years of supervised release. They were originally indicted by the Grand Jury in January 2010 for Possession of Benzylpiperazine (BZP) and had pleaded guilty on February 8, 2010. They have remained in jail since their initial arrest.

The defendants came to the attention of law enforcement on December 15, 2009, when they were stopped for a traffic violation by an OHP trooper on I-44 near Vinita. They were traveling in a rental 2009 Dodge Avenger driven by an individual with a suspended license. Upon further investigation by the trooper, it was learned that none of the four occupants of the vehicle had a valid drivers license. The trooper’s canine unit alerted during an open area sniff and led to a search of the vehicle. The search revealed approximately 6,000 pills contained in three 32-ounce mouthwash bottles. The pills were tested and found to be Benzylpiperazine (BZP), a Scheduled I controlled substance, meaning it has high potential for abuse and no accepted medical use. Other more common names for the drug on the street are: “Molly” or “Legal E” or “Legal X.” BZP is commonly used as a “club” or “designer” drug promoted to youth at raves (all-night dance parties). It has euphoric, stimulant properties similar to amphetamine, or 3,4-methylenedioxymethamphetamine (MDMA), commonly known as “ecstasy.”

This was a case of first impression in the Northern District of Oklahoma, as this particular drug, BZP, had not been previously seen by law enforcement. Also, BZP is not referenced in the Federal Sentencing Guidelines, which are normally used by the Court as a guide in calculating the range of imprisonment for criminal offenses. In this instance the

Court consulted pharmacological experts to determine the potency of BZP as it relates to other well-known illegal drugs in an attempt to arrive at a fair and just sentence for the defendants.

The case was investigated by the Oklahoma Highway Patrol, the Drug Enforcement Administration and Tulsa Police Department Task Force Officers. Assistant U.S. Attorney Robert T. Raley represented the Government in the case.